Kevin

Summaries of Self Crit Meeting
February 23, 1989

Here are some notes from our self crit, culled from comments during the meeting, about what works, what doesn't.

Context - there were a number of times people felt articles needed introductions to help put the author's view into a broader context.
Example: The Rights of Robots, #59

Illustrations - there were a lot of comments about illos, but it was hard to form a general opinion. People like illos that are directly compatible with the content of a piece (complaint that illos for Rights of Robots didn't achieve this). A couple of illustrators who received praise were Sally Wern Comport (p. 15, #60) and Julie Wawirka (Farm Stories, p.89, #60).

Article Location - Put the mediocre stuff in the back and move the good stuff up front. Also, try not to run strange things together. "Separate strangeness with sanity."
Examples: Severed Heads (p. 12,#59) in back, Neglected Genius of Stanislav Szukalski (p. 128, #60) in front.

Author Introductions - There were a number of times people said, "who is author x?" Strong agreement that authors need some kind of introduction, which also ties in with context.
Example: Computer Virus piece (p. 106,#60): who are Howard Rheingold and Corinne?

One Pagers and Half Pagers - people like shorter pieces. It provides a balance to longer articles. Half pagers need to work with whatever page they're on and not be too different.
Examples of one pagers & half pagers people liked:
Organic Agriculture (p.26,#59)
What Farmers Do with Old Bicycles (p. 37,#60)
Go (p. 134,#60)
Example of half pager that didn't work:
Whole Earth CD-ROM update (p. 64, #59) - too jarring from previous article

Space Given Articles - A number of times people commented that they liked a piece but that it needed more room. Some concern that we cram too much into too little space.
Examples: Disharmonic Convergence (p. 44, #59)
The Unpopular Voice of Black Realism (p.28, #60)

The following are some articles and spreads that received general acclaim and enthusiastic responses from staff:

Issue #59: **Don't Be Afraid Gringo** (p. 32) - good pics, draws in
World Beat (p. 53) - Received 5's for presentation and content
Rental Tools (p. 90) - wonderful, Whole Earth-type resource. Should've been put in front of mag. More pictorials.
Tales from Two Communities: The WELL and the Farm (p. 84) - people loved illos; would've liked pics of Cliff and John as hippies.
pages 86-105 - great series, tied together
pages 118-119 - "hot spread," good half pager.
pages 124-125 - great spread

Issue #60: **pages 10-11** - nice spread
Restoration(p.42) - great article. Papers & photos poor

Issue #61: **R. Crumb**, p. 34 - grand
Dreamtime (p. 2) - Presentation "2," Content "5", "Ventura is so good."

(Cindy 3-1-89)